



**ON
TRACK
OFF
ROAD**





A Doctor in the house?

In contrast to the poise displayed on the cover this was the moment where Valentino Rossi scraped leather and gravel in practice at the Gran Premi de Catalunya. The Italian is the most successful rider ever at the track with nine victories in four classes with five different bikes. He is getting closer to that first win with Ducati (and 2012 work is underway) but wasn't to be in the damp air of Spain...

Photo by Monster Energy/Milagro



MotoGP



MX

BT Torpedoed

Ben Townley was back in the fold at the Grand Prix of France and looking like the world champion of old. The Kiwi was close to a top five finish until this 'moment' with KTM's Max Nagl on an approach to a jump take-off. 'BT' came out relatively unscathed but it was a bruising re-introduction to GP life at the site where on his last appearance in 2005 he dominated both MX1 motos...

Photo by Ray Archer







AMA-MX

Can't see him for dust

Chad Reed has featured quite a lot on these pages as his career has gone through a metamorphosis in the last two years. From 'supercross super-star' to a humbler appreciation of his exceptional off-road motorcycling talent, the Australian is on course for another AMA National title. His duel with Ryan Dungey will certainly keep a lot of interest in the 450 category with ten rounds remaining...

Photo by Steve Cox







MotoGP

GRAN PREMI APEROL DE CATALUNYA

CIRCUIT DE CATALUNYA · JUNE 5TH

MotoGP winner: Casey Stoner, Honda

Moto2 winner: Stefan Bradl, Kalex

125cc winner: Nico Terol, Aprilia



STONED AGAIN

By **Gavin Emmett**

Photos by Monster Energy/Milagro, Yamaha MotoGP, Honda Pro Images





The bright skies didn't hang around for long

After the hoopla served up by Le Mans and the stunning maiden pole position for the man in the middle of the controversy, the MotoGP race at Catalunya was a letdown. It says something when spectators are begging for rain to liven up an event and some commentators even got to the point of discussing the size of the HD raindrops. (Guilty!) For once

this season, talking points were at an all-time low, even Hiroshi Aoyama held his hands up to having '120%' of the fault in his collision with Randy de Puniet. At the front, Casey Stoner allowed a lap for his hard option tyres to come in on the evidently ungrippy Barcelona track, before breezing past Jorge Lorenzo for the lead and ultimately the win.



It was the third of the season for the Australian, and he has all but recovered from the drama at Jerez and regained his place as title-favourite.

Lorenzo had said beforehand that a win would 'be a miracle' and the only glimmer of that magic was when the dark clouds began to

drop a fine mist of drizzle in the last section of track and he suddenly closed in on Stoner by a second. Order was soon restored however, and eventually nothing more exciting happened than the marshals waving the wet-weather white flags a bit more fiercely than anyone can ever remember.



Lorenzo was not too complimentary of his chances in Catalunya, asking for better steering from his M1, but another podium keeps him consistent

Ben Spies took his first podium for the factory Yamaha team and now will hope to kick on at Silverstone, where he took a first GP podium last year, whilst Andrea Dovizioso and Valentino Rossi continue to enjoy their own private battle for supremacy. The latter is showing signs of improvement however, and pointed

to the reduced gap to Stoner as proof of the team's progression.

The most curious performance was the sixth place from Simoncelli, who seemed to have learnt his lesson only too well from Le Mans and looked subdued after a shocking start dropped him to eighth in the first chicane.

Team-mate Ben Spies was happy to arrive at a circuit he knew well and liked. The America found some confidence with his first podium of the year



If MotoGP was sleep-inducing, then it was just the siesta after the slap-up feast served in Moto2. Having said that, the über-cool Stefan Bradl led from the first corner to win his third GP of the season but behind the action was as dramatic as ever in the intermediate class.

Title hopefuls Tom Luthi and Yuki Takahashi were taken out as the Swiss rider contrived to run over himself whilst hanging on to a high-side and Julian Simon and Kenan Sofuoglu split the lead group up again in their horror crash.

Dovizioso meets FC
Barcelona's Xavi



For their re-entry to the small cylinder
class Honda presented their Moto3
NSF250R for 2012 and Alex Criville
made some popular demo laps



Marc Márquez rode through the mayhem to seal his second podium in a row after a poor start, and there was delight too for local rider Aleix Espargaró. He registered his first ever Grand Prix podium in his fifth season of racing which has seen him pass through 125, 250, MotoGP and now Moto2. Andrea Iannone continues to baffle with his

unpredictability, the Spanish GP winner starting 22nd and then dropping to the back of the field before snatching a single point on the last lap. Meanwhile his compatriot Simone Corsi is the only rider showing anything like Bradl's consistency at the moment, with fourth place his fifth finish of the season in the top seven.

Cal Crutchlow's dogged fighting spirit is helping the Brit become established in MotoGP. How will he handle the attention at Silverstone?



Rossi. A fan of Paris



Claiming his fourth race out of five so far this year, Nico Terol is already etching his name onto the 125cc winner's medal, however this one came with a little controversy. Johann Zarco performed a Herculean effort to haul Terol back in the last section however, and as the Spaniard closed the door into the final corner, the Frenchman swept across a

wider line and attempted an audacious pass, which looked to have paid off as he crossed the line in first place. However he had appeared to use the elbow to ease Terol off the track, and although Zarco made it into parc-fermé, a subsequent 20-second penalty meant the win went to Terol.

Yamaha MotoGP Press Officer Gavin Matheson came up with the germ of an idea for a 'Flash Mob' tactic in promotion of the Catalan GP. Cue a big effort by several parties for Lorenzo to make a 'grid start' early Thursday morning outside one of Barcelona's busiest tourist attractions, the Sagrada Familia; in construction now for over a hundred years









Stoner unstoppable for victory number 26, even after a dose of flu...

DAMNED IF THEY DO, DAMNED IF THEY DON'T

I wouldn't want to be Paul Butler. MotoGP's Race Director has had to swallow recent doses of vitriolic bile from race-fans, media and riders; pretty much everybody. The fact that this season has already seen his Race Direction committee wielding the rulebook on more occasions than I can remember, on charges not even in the rulebook such as the mysterious 'illegal manoeuvre', makes his position an unenviable one.

The role of Race Direction was first called into question after the Stoner-Rossi clash in Jerez, with the crash deemed a 'racing accident'. Whilst there was an interchange of side-swipes, both parties seemed to agree on this. That could have been that, but the following race saw Lorenzo bring into question the aggressive riding of Simoncelli and before long a raft of riders joined his questioning of the Italian's tactics in the Riders' Safety Commission meetings. As if penned by Hollywood's finest, the Le Mans 'incident' then cropped up.

It had got serious, and at the weekend there were yet more 'moments' in the 125s and Moto2. It is Paul Butler (and to be exact, there must be agreement from all other members of the Race Direction – Dorna, FIM, IRTA) who has made these critical decisions, and whether you agree with them or not, they have brought the focus on what is actually considered fair racing and what is not.

Fans inevitably want to see wild, flamboyant passes, but do they also want to see horrific leg-breaks like that of Simon? (The slow-motion replays are sickening). No, I don't fancy being Paul Butler, he is the one who has to tread this fine line between policing the danger and allowing the riders to do what they do best; namely race. The Brit retires at the end of the season, and the man taking his place in the hot-seat, MotoGP Technical Director Mike Webb, must feel like he has just had a black sack placed on his head.



CLASSIFICATION & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP



MotoGP RESULT

Riders

1	Casey Stoner, AUS	Honda
2	Jorge Lorenzo, SPA	Yamaha
3	Ben Spies, USA	Yamaha
4	Andrea Dovizioso, ITA	Honda
5	Valentino Rossi, ITA	Ducati

MotoGP CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 5 OF 18 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Jorge Lorenzo	098
2 Casey Stoner	091
3 Andrea Dovizioso	063
4 Dani Pedrosa	061
5 Valentino Rossi	058



Moto2 RESULT

Riders

1	Stefan Bradl, GER	Kalex
2	Marc Marquez, SPA	Suter
3	Aleix Espargaro, SPA	Pons Kalex
4	Simone Corsi, ITA	FTR
5	Randy Krummenacher, SWI	Kalex

Moto2 CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 5 OF 17 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Stefan Bradl	102
2 Simone Corsi	059
3 Andrea Iannone	049
4 Julian Simon	049
5 Yuki Takahashi	047

125cc RESULT

Riders

1	Nico Terol, SPA	Aprilia
2	Maverick Viñales, SPA	Aprilia
3	Jonas Folger, GER	Aprilia
4	Sandro Cortese, GER	Aprilia
5	Efren Vazquez, SPA	Derbi

125cc CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 5 OF 17 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Nico Terol	120
2 Sandro Cortese	072
3 Jonas Folger	068
4 Maverick Viñales	065
5 Johann Zarco	063

EDWARDS KEEN TO IGNORE BONE BREAKS

The tricky downhill left-hander at turn five caught out several riders during the race weekend, including the three most experienced riders in the MotoGP championship. Valentino Rossi (see first page of the magazine) and Loris Capirossi's spills left the former world champs unharmed, but Colin Edwards' uncharacteristic crash saw the double SBK champion leave the gravel with a collarbone broken into five places.

Almost exactly a year on from Rossi breaking his leg at Mugello after a cold tyre threw him from his bike, Edwards suffered a similar fate as he went down on his out-lap. He was rushed to the Dexeus hospital in Barcelona, where famed local surgeon Dr. Xavi Mir inserted a plate and 13 titanium screws. Remarkably, Edwards posted photos on his fa-

cebook page showing him lifting his damaged right arm above his head just hours after the operation, and news filtered through from the team that the veteran racer wanted to start the GP on Sunday.

It appears Edwards was keen to keep a run of 141 GP starts going, and maintain his record of being the only rider to have raced in every 800cc MotoGP event, however circuit doctors had other ideas and due to the fact that he had undergone an anaesthetic less than 24 hours previously, the Texan was declared unfit to ride.

He was reported as saying, "I just wanted to start and maybe pull in after a couple of laps, but they wouldn't let me ride because my name isn't Valentino Rossi."



GRESINI KEEPS SIC CLOSELY GUARDED

Marco Simoncelli was a marked man as he made his way to the Barcelona race in the absence of Dani Pedrosa. Already on the end of jeers in 2008 and 2009 after his altercations with Barbera and Bautista in separate incidents at Mugello, his over-zealous move on the darling of the Catalan crowd at Le Mans had meant much worse was in store for the Italian.

Team principal Fausto Gresini received death threats by email on the weekend prior to the race, and the threats were taken seriously enough to warrant the Italian supplying his star rider with two secret service bodyguards to protect him throughout the weekend.

Every time Simoncelli appeared in pit-lane or on the giant screens, boos echoed from the main grandstand opposite the garages, and some TV shots showed unnecessary banners against the Italian rider such as "Wanted: Dead or Alive – Marco Simoncelli".

The circuit organisers rightly took down the offending flags, before the Italian had the last laugh and put his Honda on pole – wheelieing and waving to the crowd enthusiastically on his cool-down lap.



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BATTLING THE DEMONS

by Gavin Emmett

I'd like to leave aside all the discussion about 'the incident' at Le Mans, current riders say one thing, ex-riders say another, whilst journalists and armchair racers have their own opinions too; all of which remain valid but none of which converge.

I'm not going to be able to add anything new to the myriad of opinion flying about, but one thing everyone agrees on including Marco Simoncelli himself, is that they sincerely hope that Dani Pedrosa is able to race sooner rather than later – his new collarbone injury being the major downside and the only fact in amongst all the debate.

We'll get back to Pedrosa, but one of the up-sides of the various conflicts this year between the top riders is that everyone is talking about MotoGP at the moment. While some people may say they prefer the talking to be done on the track, I think all this hype and build-up is great for the sport in general. Die-hard fans are often wary of latecomers to any craze or fad, but it's a vicious circle where sport is concerned.

When sport is exciting and providing thrilling drama on and off the field of play, it inevitably attracts more interest, which then means more TV viewers, more sponsors, more money and more bikes out on track...

That's the theory anyway, and we should find out in Barcelona how many more bikes and riders we can be expecting to see on the grid next year as the FIM, Dorna and IRTA mull over the applications for the new 1000cc MotoGP class set to hit the tarmac in 2012.

For Pedrosa his current plight has seen him forgo this weekend's Grand Prix of Catalunya. It's a major blow to his title chances, and it begs the question, "How much more of this can the Spaniard take?"

Spanish daily newspaper Marca offered an intriguing snapshot of the injuries Pedrosa has succumbed to in his career so far (seventeen breaks or scrapes), and it seems that whenever the diminutive Catalan has a spill from his machine he ends up breaking something. Valentino Rossi missed several races for the first time in his career after breaking his leg but it is the ongoing trauma of the seemingly more minor injury to his shoulder that is causing him more problems, well over a year after it happened. Multiply that seventeen times for the series of knocks that Pedrosa has taken and you have to wonder when the 25 year-old's body will have had enough.

I interviewed Dani earlier this year after his stunning victory at Estoril, one of the best races of his stellar career, and more than anything he was feeling relieved that he was finally at full fitness and that he seemed to have come through his annual injury worries within touching distance of top of the standings, something he had been unable to achieve since he stepped up to MotoGP in 2006.

He sincerely feared for his career with the numbness he had been feeling in his arm since the crash that ended his title tilt last year, but now he will surely have regressed to that dark place, wondering when the injury-curse will finally leave him alone.





MX

GRAND PRIX OF FRANCE

ST JEAN D'ANGELY - MAY 5TH

MX1 winner: Steven Frossard, Yamaha

MX2 winner: Tommy Searle, Kawasaki

LE MAGNIFIQUE

By Adam Wheeler. Photos by Ray Archer





A section of the crowd around the other side of the vast St Jean D'Angely circuit



After taking his second pole position of the season Clement Desalle said he wanted to avoid mistakes on race-day. It wasn't quite like that but his second moto win was perfection



The Grand Prix of France opened the most decisive stage of the FIM Motocross World Championship. Six races in seven weeks, taking the campaign to round ten of fifteen, would largely plot the courses for the MX1 and MX2 title chases. St Jean D'Angely was under the

spotlight for those with one eye on the 65th Motocross of Nations on September 18th and several facelift features were notable as were a very decent 32,000 attendance (weekend figure) most of which will be counting the cost of two major race meetings in 2011.



The temporary KTM melt-down allowed Tommy Searle in the door and prompted much joy after a few years in injury wilderness

The clammy heat saw several noteworthy occurrences from the two days sweated out. One of main issues was the track the riders had to deal with. In short quite a few didn't. The worn lay-out prompted more discussion and talk of bike set-up than perhaps any other so far this year.

The problem lay in the search for traction across hard-pack sections that would suddenly delve into softer mud and punishing ruts. The heat of Saturday caused zealous hosepipe activity to exacerbate the slipperiness and a torrential storm that evening provided further natural irrigation.

Where did I park again? This background will be much busier in September but it remains to be seen whether Herlings will be at the MX of Nations



The first moto on Sunday occurred on damp and more forgiving soil and the second on harder, rougher ground. 'I think this is one of the worst tracks of the season for me,' said Monster Energy Yamaha's Harri Kullas. 'When it was raining yesterday everyone said 'oh no'

but I was thinking 'yes!''.

Out of both categories it was Monster Energy Yamaha's Steven Frossard who was the absolute master of the conditions for the factory team's second success in a row and the Frenchman's very first in the premier class.



Steven Frossard was calmer and showed no sign whatsoever he was racing at home. A special performance

"I was really focussed on my riding and for sure my goal was victory today. I was smooth and didn't take many risks," said the MX1 rookie who weathered some attention from team-mate David Philippaerts and world champ Tony Cairoli – before both crashed – in the first moto then glided to a runner-up spot

behind Clement Desalle (a crashee again on the works Rockstar Suzuki but still notching a fourth podium from five) in the second outing. Credit to new French champion Xavier Boog in fourth who demonstrated the 2012 factory Kawasakis could be formidable equipment.



Zach Osborne briefly had to look behind him for the rest of the world in France

MX2 was discernible not only for CLS Monster Energy Kawasaki Pro Circuit Tommy Searle's first Grand Prix win since he left to follow the American dream in 2008 but also for being only the third podium ceremony since the start of 2009 that did not involve a works KTM. Red Bull Teka KTM's Ken Roczen again

reeled-off a GP that contrasted perfection with problems and Jeffrey Herlings left the circuit with a sore ankle.

'I don't know what happened,' said Roczen. 'I got sideways on the take-off. I didn't have any pain because of the race 'fever' but now I have little bits of pain everywhere!



I didn't feel comfortable on the track all weekend and had arm-pump in the first moto. I thought this [crashing] is not normal. I haven't crashed twice in a race for something like five years.'

Yamahas chased the Kawasaki onto the box; Zach Osborne now reaching the speed and

form that could see him mount a thorough charge for the title (in spite of a fracture to his right radius) and Gautier Paulin satisfied French clamour with his second trophy on the bounce.



Monster Energy ran a Pit-bike
Championship for the press on the
start-straight Friday evening. Carnage...

Photos by Milagro



Ken Roczen's second moto comeback was curtailed by what he described as a bike problem after two falls



Second podium on the trot for the popular Paulin who is already being hunted by teams for 2012





Tony Cairoli is coming back to full race fitness and is now second in the championship



FRENCH FANCY...

The combination of a distant press room, poor internet provisions and, for me anyway, an annual blast of hayfever in this more rural region of France means that St Jean D'Angely is never the most desirable of Grands Prix to work at.

As a spectacle it is one of the premier events on the calendar and is only rivalled by the British round for crowd numbers, atmosphere and boisterous vocal passion for home-grown riders.

Thankfully the organisers used their 'dress rehearsal' for the Motocross of Nations in four months to make the circuit an easier prospect to deal with and I have to compliment the faultless communications set-up and the altered layout of the facility. Aside from the quite phenomenal storm for the better part of an hour on Saturday evening it was a pretty smooth event in front of the scenes.

On the track it was heartening in a way to see

Zach Osborne and Tommy Searle interrupting the KTM show in MX2. Roczen's dominance in spite of arm-pump in the first moto led me to begin evaluating the entertainment factor of the class such as the German's superiority on the Austrian machine.

After his unexpected get-off in the second race – along with Clement Desalle's fall the more shocking incident of the weekend - Roczen is not quite looking like the untouchable superman that he seemed to be on return from the US and his AMA supercross experiences. In the wake of writing this he will probably now blitz both motos in Portugal, scene of his GP debut in 2009 (where he finished 7th overall).

A quick 'get well soon' to HM Plant Red Bull KTM UK's Graeme Irwin who crashed in the first phases of the first MX1 chase and broke four vertebrae. The Irishman should be on his way to a medical unit in Paris this week.





CLASSIFICATION & WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP

MX1 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Steven Frossard, FRA	Yamaha
2	Tony Cairoli, ITA	KTM
3	Clement Desalle, BEL	Suzuki
4	Xavier Boog, FRA	Kawasaki
5	Evgeny Bobryshev, RUS	Honda

MX2 OVERALL RESULT

Riders

1	Tommy Searle, GBR	Kawasaki
2	Zach Osborne, USA	Yamaha
3	Gautier Paulin, FRA	Yamaha
4	Jeffrey Herlings, NED	KTM
5	Ken Roczen, GER	KTM

MX1 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 5 OF 15 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Clement Desalle	199
2 Tony Cairoli	193
3 Steven Frossard	179
4 Max Nagl	179
5 David Philippaerts	161

MX2 WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (AFTER 5 OF 15 ROUNDS)

Riders	Points
1 Ken Roczen	226
2 Jeffrey Herlings	213
3 Tommy Searle	199
4 Zach Osborne	162
5 Gautier Paulin	160

ON THE ROAD 2 RECOVERY...

The first auction for Road 2 Recovery International took place in France and was the first of three planned for the rest of 2011 (one confirmed for the British Grand Prix on August 21st). The initiative is the wing of a foundation already established in the United States to assist injured riders with recovery expenses or setting up a new way of life. Founder Bob Moore, a former motocross world champion and now influential sport agent, revealed in an event on Saturday evening that Road 2 Recovery International would hope to reach the same level of assistance for FIM GP riders as its U.S. incarnation that has already provided one million dollars over ten years to victims of accidents.

"We are a total non-profit organisation. We have one employee for administration but oth-

erwise every pound, dollar or Euro goes into the fund ready for if a rider needs it," said the American who was based for twelve years in Europe and will be again from September. "I would love to say that we could give one millions dollars to every injured rider but that is just not possible. Our goal is to get up to 100,000 euros by the end of the year and maybe broaden into road racing but I wanted to start this in a sport I love and have been a part of."

With Wings for Life already present in the FIM Motocross World Championship it was encouraging to see the effort being placed to provide yet more provisions for riders in arguably one of the riskiest yet poorly compensated motorcycle sports. See www.road2recovery.com/international for more information.



FRENCH LOOKING AHEAD TO NATIONS

Build-up to the 2011 Motocross of Nations was already in motion at St Jean D'Angely. Talk of the French team had begun with the federation having their usual embarrassment of riches to choose from making the French arguably the second biggest force in world motocross behind the Americans. Gautier Paulin, winner of a moto at the 2009 edition on an MX1 machine, presented the provisional team jersey to the crowd and stated in the post-race press conference that he'd prefer to race his factory YZ250FM Yamaha after two appearances on the bigger bike (although he is heavily rumoured to be switching to MX1 for 2012).

Steven Frossard, when pressed on his thoughts for returning to St Jean for a second time this year said: 'I was picked to race three years ago and got injured so I couldn't ride. This time I prefer not to talk about it!'.

The three man squad will carry the expectations and support of an anticipated bumper crowd and Paulin and Frossard are just two from a group including Musquin, Boog, Pourcel, Charlier (all championship winners) to be considered.

FOX BRIGADE BACK ON DUTY AT ST JEAN

Fox again brought their 'Fox Brigade' set-up to the Grand Prix of France; an innovative scheme where fans of the brand and kids can sign-up and receive their own membership card as well as personalise their own free t-shirt or cap right there in the paddock.

It is the third year that Fox have provided this unique 'attraction' and it is a move that sets them apart from their rivals in a crowded market vying for consumer attention.

'We saw it as a good opportunity to provide something for the fans and it has expanded

from t-shirts to caps and we had foam hands this weekend,' revealed Fox's European Marketing Manager Brode Vosloo.

'We always get people asking 'are you sure its free?!' It takes quite a bit of planning and budgeting for a year but typically we get through around 500 units of each item at a GP and it is cool to see how it is received.'

The website www.foxbrigade.eu has wallpapers and other downloads as well as plenty of other info on the 'brigade's' activities.

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MOVING QUICKLY ON...

by Adam Wheeler

This is issue six of OTOR and while the publication has to evolve in form and has yet to offer some more diverse content for a motorcycling audience, I'm happy that we will be able to provide better compatibility for Apple's iPad, iPhone and iPod Touch from the seventh edition on June 21st.

Not only this but a slightly different-looking OTOR will also have some embedded video links for those watching through mobile devices and who are hooked up to the world of Wifi that seems to be forever expanding around us.

Speaking of connecting to the web...I'm sitting here at St Jean D'Angely for the Grand Prix of France struggling for air in the new press-room facility but quite impressed with the investment this competent motoclub have made to one of the country's best-equipped circuits for the Nations. it was in 2005 at Ernee (up the road and west of Le Mans) where the public attendance and imagination exploded for the first time this century with a weekend figure of over 50,000. The numbers reached a peak of 80,000 in the UK in 2006 and have hovered around the 50-60k mark since.

Stuck in a very rural zone of France the ability to keep interested observers updated from St Jean D'Angely was nothing short of a ball-ache in the past and in 2010 we even had to de-camp from the track Sunday evening to use the more stable internet provision at the local town hall. The occupants of said-government building have fully embraced the exposure and commerce that large international motorsport events bring to the town and region by permitting the extension of a permanent hard line (at

a cost of 100,000 euros) several kilometres to the circuit infrastructure. We can now tweet with more harmony than the nearby birds perched on the trees.

'Getting online' is the kind of valuable resource that is almost essential now in sports coverage where photos, opinions and descriptions of incidents are put within reach of eyeballs around the world only seconds after they've happened.

It is not with fondness that I recall the days of using an iPass and a telephone cable with my laptop and spending countless hours looking for places to plug-in and then suffer that grinding mechanical whirl-and chug of the dial-up tones. For hardened hacks the digital age must feel like an alternative universe to the days of phoning through copy, fax machines, and couriers for photographic film.

On another matter I'd like to say a big welcome (and also thank you) to Gavin Emmett for joining the OTOR contrib team and sharing road racing duties with Matt.

For followers of MotoGP you might recognise Gav as the face of the excellent podcast 'After the Flag'. He is also the commentator with veteran MotoGP journalist Nick Harris for the international feed and is therefore heard around the world, not least as Speed's voice of the sport for an American audience. Gav is a Leeds United Football Club fan - for which we'll let him off - but has more than ten years experience of being fully immersed in MotoGP therefore his opinion and nuance is up-there with the best.



FEATURE

MONSTER ENERGY



PRO CIRCUIT

VANS

PARTS
UNLIMITED



thor



AMERICA'S MOST WANTED MAN...

Photos by Ray Archer

MONSTER

Mitch Payton has tutored and assisted some of the greatest riders on the American off-road racing scene in the modern era. Spaces aligned to his formidable Pro Circuit business and team are highly sought after.

Names like McGrath, Carmichael, Stewart, Langston, Townley, Pichon, Brown, Villopoto have passed through the ranks since 1991 and Pro Circuit have officially extended their reach to the FIM Motocross World Championship with CLS Kawasaki since 2010. Payton will toast 20 years with Kawasaki in 2013 and the PC empire shows no signs of slowing...

How did the association with CLS come about why come to Grands Prix?

I enjoy the Grands Prix. I think it is a good series and it is competitive. We sell product so we need to be in the GPs and we never really had a way where we could structure a team unless we were going to do it on our own. Harry [Nolte, CLS Chief Engineer] had come to the United States a few times and we had become friends. He loves racing, is switched-on and was the key guy in order for us to have a programme. When I have worked with guys in the past, in the two-stroke days, we'd give them parts and think things were going well but within something like three weeks they'd done something different, taken it off the bike or copied it. It never worked. I knew that if I wanted to do it then I needed someone like Harry to be my guy and the team accepted my help if he was able to run it. Last year for our first year the riders were already picked and it was a bit of a rush to get it altogether but we got some great results and I think it will be better this season. I think the CLS team is a class operation and we will try to expand it a little more next year as long as Kawasaki supports them correctly.

What is your depth of involvement? Do you just supply engine parts?

It is more than that. They run the same suspension and the engines are very similar to ours. They have a few cost restraints that are prohibitive to a couple of little things but we are very close on a lot of stuff. They will spend time in the U.S. to see how we do things and we have the same sponsors and so on. There is a synergy there. It takes a little while to get to know everybody and get to trust everybody but I'm really happy and I hope it is a model people can be proud of.

Is it now possible to sync teams and riders with boundaries coming down between MX/SX and the AMA and FIM calendars?

Yes. The AMA blundered a year or so ago when they decided to put the age limit for racing at eighteen. If they had left it like that then, well, if I had a child then I would have sent them to Europe to ride a couple of years of GPs. They can ride there from fifteen, so any kids would have come back a more mature rider. It was a big mistake and they realised that. One of the reasons we got involved with the world championship is that we wanted a base over there so I could swap riders back and forth and that rule for a while made it seem like that was the only thing to do...

So what you have now is like an extremely high-profile 'feeder' team...

It is, and the age limit going back down helped the American side. If you look at some of the riders coming through - Christophe [Pourcel] is amazingly talented and now Roczen - there are some very talented kids in Europe and sometimes they get a little overlooked. The European teams have to remember that they need to allow and encourage these kids to race a little bit of supercross because if they do want to come here then you should want the best for those guys and that means not always just riding outdoors.

Ken Roczen was the first to attempt quite a few Supercross races then come over for a full GP season. Will we see more of that?

[Pause] I think that was a little bit crazy in my opinion, but I used to help with things like that ten years ago. In '93 I helped Pichon do a three supercross races and we used it as a perk for the European kids at the local AMA events. However the odds of a plan like that working successfully...? I'm not sure. I mean if Roczen had busted his ass at Vegas KTM would have looked like clowns. He was fortunate and he had a feather in his hat. It has to make sense and Ken is a one-in-a-thousand guy that that could work out for. He seems one of those extremely driven kids that wants to do everything.

To help the U.S. GP you floated the idea of using the event as both an AMA and FIM round...
I had mentioned it to a few FIM guys at the

Nations last year. It would make for an ass-kicking event. Everybody would have to check egos a little bit and each series brings its own unique character but it would be worth it for the sake of the sport. You would have all the Americans and all the Europeans. If you won, you won. You would get the same points and bonuses. You'd get 30,000 people here.

What about future technical development of the bikes? Is there still a big challenge to be had?

The only thing that is becoming more evident is that to make large strides you really have to push the envelope and touch on a lot of things that are really expensive and very fragile. It means a lot of turnaround and that also puts the price up further and that is hard to justify; it is still just a dirtbike. We are always trying to find something that has more power, handles better and is lighter but everything has a cost too.





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PRO CIRCUIT: THE MECHANIC'S VIEW...

Wayne Lumgair has followed stepson Tyla Rat-tray from South Africa to Belgium to California with FIM World Championship success and also to the top step of the AMA National podium. The renowned spanner-man has enjoyed a special relationship with the hard 2008 MX1 number one and has been involved in several top Grand Prix teams (Vangani, Champ and the factory KTM crew). He is now at Pro Circuit and in a position to offer some perspective from inside the hallowed halls at Corona...

How would you compare being at Pro Circuit to other European-based teams that you've worked with in the past?

The successful teams are similar in many ways but I think Pro Circuit works harder and puts in more hours than the other squad I've worked for. I believe that comes from Mitch wanting to win more than any owner or boss I've ever met. To be honest the success is all because of him. He's the driving force behind Pro Circuit; his 'win at all costs' attitude funnels down to all the staff and makes the company and team very powerful.

Has your role evolved with Tyla simply through the set-up with Pro Circuit?

It hasn't really evolved. At Pro Circuit the mechanics build their rider's engines. There is no 'engine guy'. Each mechanic is responsible for the race bike, practice bike, race engines and practice engines so there is a lot of work. Pro Circuit have a specific method; each engine must be built for each race and the mechanics must follow this method. I think this makes

each mechanic prouder when his rider does well and I also think this system gets a lot of respect from the industry. If you work at Pro Circuit as a mechanic, you are one of the best there is.

What is a typical working day?

They are all different. One day you might be building a race engine or building your race bike, another day you could be out at the track testing or working on the practice bike. One thing is for sure you are always very busy. There are rarely any easy, quiet days, not at Pro Circuit.

How is it working for Mitch?

He works hard and expects his staff to work hard. He is a good person and he takes care of his mechanics. He just wants to win and he expects to win.

Tell us something we don't know about Pro Circuit...

If any of the riders win at the weekend then on Monday Mitch orders pizza for the entire facility, from the shop to the workshop to the warehouse. So every Sunday night you've got all the guys that work in the warehouse who know nothing about racing, on the internet, checking if we won cause that means free pizza and drinks. He always orders from the same place so you can imagine how happy the local little pizza shop is on a Monday if we've won. It's little things like that that Mitch does to look after his staff that makes it extra nice to work there.



Photo by Frank Hoppen

BACK TO THE LAKE

It looks like Kevin Windham's tour of duty with American Honda is coming to an end as early as this next weekend at High Point. Windham is 33 years old, and the nationals are asking a lot of him. He loves racing, and he loves being at the races, but he wasn't training for the outdoors before being called up by the team to fill in for the injured Josh Grant

and Trey Canard, and while he's still having fun being at the events, he says the actual racing part isn't nearly as fun as he hoped it would've been. Look for him to contest High Point and maybe Budds Creek before retiring back to Mississippi to wakeboard and hang with his perpetually growing family.

SOLDIERING ON

I'm working with some PR people and a few people from the U.S. military to get racers to head over to Walter Reid Hospital in Washington, DC, the weekend of the Budds Creek National in two weeks' time, and if you're reading this, I could use help. I have a friend in the facility that lost his legs to a roadside bomb in Afghanistan, and there are many like him who

are also motocross fans and I know they would love to see their favorite racers come by and express what it means to them to know people are willing to sacrifice so much. Let's make this happen. It'll be Friday before the race, June 17th. Any and all are welcome. The more the merrier.



Kevin Windham: not feeling
the love with the Outdoors



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CHILLING OUT...

by Steve Cox

I actually had a weekend off. It was unbelievable. Not like just a weekend off from traveling or something, but I actually didn't do any motorcycle related work whatsoever. It was incredible.

Friday night, when I would normally be flying in to some city here in the USA, I ended up hanging out in Laguna Beach at a French restaurant, eating a tasty steak and then walking on the seafront. Then Saturday night, I saw legendary comedian Billy Connolly live in Hollywood before I hit a rooftop bar, followed by a club called "The Colony", where I ran into Pauly Shore. I didn't know he was still alive, but apparently he managed to weez his way into the club just like I did.

And then Sunday, I had a photo-shoot with a very cool chick named Jessie Lee. We broke into an abandoned winery with my camera and some lights and outfits and made magic happen while a family of coyotes followed us around.

So, that was kind of like work on the last day, but it was really nice to be able to sort of remember what it's like to shoot stuff that doesn't have two wheels or an engine.

A lot of people are better at something when they concentrate on that and only that, but I tend not to be that way. If anything, I'm better at things when I allow myself enough time away to do other things so that I can return with a little bit of a fresher perspective on it, and that's how I am with photography. I love

shooting motocross and supercross, but I find that shooting other subjects and styles actually helps with my motocross and supercross stuff. It gives you a fresh way of seeing the subject and opens up your eyes a bit to different ways of lighting things or different angles to shoot from.

And the comedy shows and clubs and what-not, those are just nice to not have to think about anything even remotely related to work for once. That's a bit of a rarity in our line of work. When I was in construction, it was nice to get home and be totally done with the working day: it's not like you can bring construction home with you (!) But we'll be back at it next weekend at High Point. See you there.









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'On-track Off-road' is a free, bi-weekly publication for the screen focused on bringing the latest perspectives on events, blogs and some of the very finest photography from the three worlds of the FIM Motocross World Championship, the AMA Motocross and Supercross series' and MotoGP. 'On-track Off-road' will be published online at www.ontrackoffroad.com every Tuesday. To receive an email notification that a new issue available with a brief description of each edition's contents simply enter an address in the box provided on the homepage. All email addresses will be kept strictly confidential and only used for purposes connected with OTOR.

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